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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DPC 279

ON THE RECORD UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED

TRANSCRIPT OF PRESS AND RADIO NEWS BRIEFING, WEDNESDAY,
DECEMBER 26, 1962, 12:31 p.m.

MR. WHITE: Gentlemen, I trust that you all had a very merry, pleasant Christmas, and that you now look forward to the New Year with as little possible work intervening as possible.

So let me just say that we have one release, No. 747, which is the weekly round-up of current international conferences and meetings in which the US Government is participating, and we are issuing a revised press release on the US Advisory Commission which submits its report on cultural presentation programs. We discovered, after the earlier one had been put out, that a sentence was missing - not very substantive in nature, but just to keep the record straight.

Finally, I would like to remind those of you who have not yet picked them up that we do have this volume of DOCUMENTS ON GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY, Volume IV, which covers the period April 1, 1935 - March 4, 1936. This is for publication at 6:30 tomorrow night.

That's all I have, gentlemen.

Q: Line, what was the missing sentence out

Q Line, if we can move on to another area, what do we know about reports that a large number of Soviets were seen leaving Cuba aboard a ship?

A Very little, actually. We have nothing as to what these men may have been doing down there. So other than the fact that a good many Soviet men, women, and children are boarding these ships, that's about all we know about them.

Q Do you have any estimates on the number?

A As to the number boarding?

Q Yes.

A No, I do not have that.

Q Do you have any estimate of the Soviet troops that remained in Cuba just before this several hundred left?

A Well, I would think, on a strictly BACKGROUND basis, the estimates are around 12,000. Now how many of these people departing today may or may not be members of these units, as I say, we just don't know.

Q By the term "units" do you mean the 12,000 are in military units?

A Well, military forces, some of them are in units. Some of them are-- I suppose all of them are in units, actually, and, again, I am on a strictly BACKGROUND basis, because I don't know too much about this

Some are technicians, obviously, as opposed to fighting men, as we would use the term.

Q Linc, this is the first that I knew that some of these Soviets had brought their wives and kids with them when they went there. Are there many that we know of?

A Well, that's the point. There have been quite a number of Soviet technicians in Cuba, non-military, and we knew that some of them brought families with them. Now, as I say, whether these women and children, or wives and sons and daughters, of technicians remaining are leaving with their immediate families, or whether some troops are mixed in with this, there is just no way of knowing that definitively as of this stage. *End Background.*

Q Linc, further on the Cuban thing, does the Department have any word, one way or another, about any plans Castro may have for releasing the 23 Americans in Cuba?

A No. We, of course, are informed that Mr. Donovan and Red Cross officials are negotiating with Cuban authorities on this subject, but as to what the outcome will be, we don't know. This subject, as you know, was first broached by Mr. Donovan during his negotiations for the release of the Cuban prisoners.

Q How is Mr. Donovan acting--is he acting